

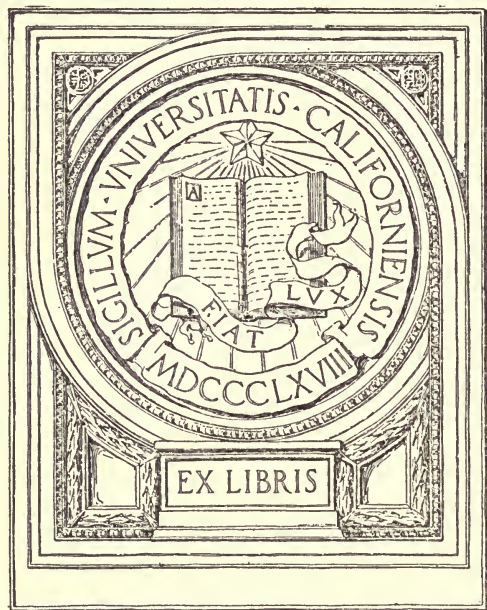
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**THE
HUMPBACK,
THE
CRIPPLE
AND THE
ONE-EYED MAN**

**BY
LIONEL JOSAPHARE**

**SAN FRANCISCO
A. M. ROBERTSON
PUBLISHER**

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LIONEL JOSAPHARE

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CONTENTS FOR NO. 2.

BY Lionel Josaphare

<i>The Cynic at the Feast</i>	<i>page 5</i>
<i>Renunciation</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>A Sweetheart of Other Days</i>	<i>13</i>
THE HUMPBACK, THE CRIPPLE	
AND THE ONE-EYED MAN	<i>15</i>
<i>The Sovereign in the Street</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Sonnets of an Angel</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>The Workingman's God</i>	<i>34</i>

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BY A. M. ROBERTSON

THE
HUMPBAC,
THE
CRIPPLE
AND THE
ONE-EYED MAN.
BY
LIONEL JOSAPHARE.

Poems
on the State
of Labor.

PUBLISHED BY
A. M. ROBERTSON
SAN FRANCISCO

THE CHARLES L. GASKILL PRESS

Class 1907

PREFACE AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The work of Mr. Christian Binkley, announced in the first number of the Flame Series, does not appear herein. Mr. Binkley has received some of the highest praise accorded a California poet, and we hope to publish some of his literature anon.

From a critical view, the poems in this volume may seem an attempt to exalt, rather than a manner of receiving exaltation from, the subject matters thereof. It may be declared that only beautiful objects are the resources of poetry. I do not deny that poetry is the expression of the beautiful, but deny that it is always such. Objects of less heavenliness have also their places in art. Poetry can contemplate physical misery and lose none of its own elemental grandeur, if it is true and intrinsically divine.

It may be said that benevolence is one thing and beauty another. Yet benevolence is the beauty of the soul. There are some to whom an oil-painting of Christ in a gorgeous throne room, curing a Syrian prince of a languid feeling, would contain more essential beauty than would a representation of Him at the Mount of Olives, protecting the woman who had sinned. The misconception would arise from the fact that the paraphernalia of regal magnificence in itself would be so ad-

vantageous that an artist of ordinary ability could not fail making a portrayal of beauty of it. But the episode at the Mount of Olives, with its native background, requires, for its presentation, a limner of the soul. Anyone can fancy riches; but soul must be shown to us. Moreover, the baser sentiments of envy and greed are quickly aroused to the admiration of sumptuous beauty, even though poorly painted, while poverty is so repugnant to our thoughts that few can keep their pride in abeyance until their artistic discernment has had the time to examine the art quietly.

Or, in respect of the same subject of sheer beauty demanded by some poets, one might ask, Which are the most beautiful, the children of the poor or of the wealthy. Romance would answer that the juvenile dauphins, princes and czarowitzes of our own Four Hundred, with their bright hair, large eyes and cracker-fed complexions, have the true and best beauty. But I give judgment against them. Their faces are the product of their environment. In them already appear the selfishness, the petulance, the obstinacy, the cruelty and all the favors of wealth. You may call this beautiful. It is. It is. But it is earth compared with the divinity of sadness in the countenance of a child of careless beauty. When poverty is beautiful, it is supreme.

L. J.

THE CYNIC AT THE FEAST

The parlors glowed. Their frescoed heavens
fed

On music's cry and flowers' breath that spread
Round scenic women, who through all did
shine

That all the triumph seemed of woman shed;
Which Junos vouched what happiness
was mine;

Spoke from their hearts, which languidly they
fanned;

And pressed good wishes on my happy hand.

Well-manned, well-damed was Pleasure's easy
crew.

To them the sphinx of wine loquacious grew.
Life's meaning in the amorous goblet
showed,

Like Jove's with Cupid's face reflecting
through.

While from the high-held glass base pas-
sion flowed

As midnight in the mirrors twice did shine
On them who drank of the carnivorous wine.

The secret in the bottle was revealed
To all, and none the mystery concealed;
 Till, from the mouth of each lascivious
 varlet,
To space the tongues and lips of wine ap-
pealed.
 Folly mocked folly; crimson blushed at
 scarlet;
Youth preached its broad experience; and Age
Its longer wisdom led upon the stage.

Sweet and lascivious, drunken and divine,
Some new mythology these gods design,
 Whose vice their heirs will emulate in art
When future pagans light the bloody shrine.
 With such affections taken to her heart,
Her smooth complexion jeweled o'er with
 smiles,
The flashing wife her spirit's life beguiles.

The men! How airily their deeds encroach!
On what a precious-hedged preserve they
poach!

To what rare task is all their wit ad-
dressed?

Ah! Some with gay flirtation would approach

A mother nursing her wee babe at breast.

Who would not groan? A thornless rose of
joy

Ne'er made a cynic of the gardener's boy.

If it be sin to throw a loaf away,

What greater crime to feed them who can pay!

Why give the feast to them who do not
need,

When thousands for the want of it decay?

Why take from modesty and give to
greed?

Why to rich bellies boast what foods inflate?

Good men are starving; let the full ones wait.

RENUNCIATION

Defrayed in hope and in my soul's respect,
And heart-mad, I forsook the world's defect;
 Absconded from this pushing world's de-
 sires,
And lit the ghost within me to reflect;
 Whereby to swage the burn of wicked
 fires,
Which flare so wide along our mortal ways
That even virtue feels the general blaze.

I studied thus: The world has done me wrong
By making virtue weak and evil strong.
 With ancient foulness it besets my youth;
With tainted breath it sings the sweetest song.
 Moss grows upon the shady side of truth,
And the same slanderous vapors trickle down
Walls of ill fame or homes of sweet renown.

What opportunity has virtue here?
Its duty, toil; its recompense, a tear;
 Its innocence the object of attack,
A scene where strategy can reappear.
 What splendors can illumine wicked
 black?
Rather will darkness, hardly put to rout,
Besiege the lamp until its oils give out.

If still in pleasure I could live alone,
The woes of others were not worth a groan.
 But who will dare to lock his doors to duty
And revel in perfection all his own?
 And yet the sotted crowd will smirch his
 beauty,
His deeds refute and cumber him with hate,
Predict his fall and wide the tale relate.

Lo, night-browed Melancholy, fierce Despair,
Far-limping ills, Repentance and dull Care,
And Hope with sagging wounds, and
Grief serene,
And Poverty with dust upon its hair,
Make dingy figures in a wicked scene.
But Wealth, corrupt physician of their pain,
Neglects relief, howe'er the lips complain.

My brow is heavy at the bleeding sight;
But these, my friends, now scorning to requite
The long arraignment of truth-telling day,
With pleasure and with perfume fill the night.
Sick with my conscience, while my friends
are gay,
I wonder if there will be God's forgiving
For those who now commit the sin of living.

Ashamed of all, I leave their ways unkind,
To live in the condemned cells of my mind.
 There in what glory may I fall asleep,
Or else what massy locks and queer keys find!
 What passages and subterfuges deep,
What sliding panels, clap-traps in the floors,
What stairways, private streets and dreamy
 doors!

In what suspense of tumult shall I dwell,
Or storms that rock the columns of mid-hell?
 Ghosts I shall meet, and question them
 who wrote
Of sorrow, in what griefs their own they fell.
 And I may find, within those halls remote,
What windows that on secret landscapes look,
Or what dark midnights for a lamp and book?

Perhaps, along those haunted prison-stones,
Some human visitor may clank his bones ;
 At whose intruding footstep, I my head
Shall raise, inviting him to share my groans,
 And make the villain feed as I have fed,
Although he make a wry face at my fare,
The bread of wisdom, waters of despair.

A SWEETHEART OF OTHER DAYS

The shantied street was crooked where I
walked
With insignificance at eve. The houses,
Corrupt, or damaged of proportion, seemed
Built of some weird solidity of shadow,
Or haply bronze, but very druxy bronze,
Which, pretty for a picture of a story,
Looked quite unreal or the fanciful
And stark romance of realism, as if
Some pessimistic architect planned them
As purgatorial homes for sinners auld
Awaiting the divinity of death.
Yet here the heart of man feels the same beat
Of Nature's incorruptible jurisprudence
As elsewhere feels it; and Fate works here too.
Sweetheart of other days, we meet again.
I wist I had farewelled our love away;
I did not think to act this part again;—
That I should stalk before an audience
Of shadowy sick-featured, sallow Fates
And let a gallery of evil spirits
Clap me again upon a pelted stage!
Is Hell the repetition of a grief
That has already saturated years
With undiminished sighs? I grieve again.

And yet, like one who opes a truthful book,
To find again some poetry forgot,
I read again the beauty of your face
And feel the rushing sympathy of yore,
That still contents. A moment's peace be with
me!

The noon and Sabbath of my soul is now.

THE HUMPBAC, THE CRIPPLE AND THE ONE-EYED MAN

One eve, as at my window-panes I stood,
Gray films of memory patched the dull gray
view,

Where thoughts, blithe-winged, meandered as
they would,

Like odd-eyed fairies that from childhood flew.
When mind's deep glass on childhood's ground
reflects,

Where is the childish tenant of that place?

Dead in his older self, now recollects

The inscrutable sorrow on that infant's face.

Yond sets the sun, that has not lost a day

In tacking through the sky his blazing hull.

But where's the light that sunned that child at
play?

E'en memory's picture-light of it is dull.

Thus oft, while legendary youth adjusting

To present movings in the glare of wealth,

I gaze past little house-tops poor and rusting,

Where honor crawls and freedom breathes by
stealth.

To those brown wooden homes my thoughts
'gan fall,

My love and pity passed; and fancy strayed

Through dark defiles of streets, which ended
small,

And there the ragged-running rabble played.

Out of that struggling multifarious throng,

A movement, as of setting forth, began;

From which emerged a captain huge and
strong,

What time I saw he was a humpbacked man.

I next beheld him in my room. His tread
Was like an army's, though he came alone.
With woes to stoppage fraught, he gazed
 ahead
And, victim of a thousand crimes, did groan.
Lofty, though wronged and lulled from beauty's line,
Despoilt with task and years, on him, withal,
Innumerable beauties did still twine,
Like roses livening a ruined wall.
Rigid with strength, solidified with grief,
He felt no amber sun-beams make him bright,
But saw, with the magic eyesight of belief,
The hand of wrong betwixt him and the light.

His frown was apt with anger to chastise,
Like God's, to awe the ungodly to obey;
And yet the kindlier manner of his eyes
Was like a twilight turning bluebells gray.
His smile was like a hope of sweeter woe,—
A vision rising from a lake of tears;
For tears from hopes and pent-up visions flow,
And his had flowed in spirit through the years.
Of sentences to tie into a tale,
He lacked supply, nor gained them from the
 gloom,
And, when of his few words he made avail,
His voice was like the midnight in a tomb.

He showed me wrongs and schedules of complaint,
In wide expectance of my soon surprise;
And at such misery as he could paint,
Asked me to imitate his bardlike sighs.
But I, in walls with gladder pictures brimming,
Did look on his with courtesy at most.
Ill-framed with splendors, frightless was his
limning—
The noontime telling of a midnight ghost.
Then he, with toppling-heavy shoulders
bowed,
Withdrew unsoothed and midst his people
went,
Obscurely as the shadow of a cloud
Through a dark forest. Then my view was
bent.

Then came a rogue who entered with a thud—
A crippled, crack-legged, crimson-browed
alarm,
A night-hag's dwarf, inbred with Satan's blood
And stamped by Hell's astrology for harm.
Softly! He is all memory now. But I
Remember what a tragic rage he had
And wrinkly folds of shadow that did ply
His face and seem, each one, a scowl to add.
Hobbler upon mismated legs he came,
Stopping in fault, or with short-coming hurry,
Limped hither thither like a shifting flame
And cursed and perjured with exceeding
worry.

From a short reverie and scowl aside,
This flame-and-smoke hued villain then re-
bounded;

"Remorse on you! Fall down and weep," he
cried,

And, being raged, a throaty tale expounded.
"Boilers will burst in wrath and vent their
ills;

New patriots your walls from walls will pluck,
Unlock the axles of the steaming mills
And hurl the hot vibrating wheels amuck.

I see your windows bursted spouting flame
And you in cinders blacker than ours now—"
Madman! I stopped him there and, with ex-
claim,

Seated my fist compactly on his brow.

Binding his forehead with his arms he quailed
Out of my eyes, nor back his dudgeon darting,
Avaunted and himself with tears regaled
And sobs to keep him company departing.

And then I saw that I was not alone:

The third who now against me did contrive
Was clad in mouldy black, not aye his own,
And, having but one eye, looked half alive.
The eye survivor seemed in fright to stare
Still at the violence that had quashed the
other;

Or else accounted all the world unfair
To leer upon the cave left by its brother.

Shiftless, erelong he into words did stray;
Inhaled the simple twilight for his lung,
Which worked (in their behalf who were
away)

The leaky loud poetics of his tongue.
His plural and most voluble debating
Paused often and amazed to pick its choice
Of words and repetitions lost and waiting
In the invisible mazes of his voice.
He said that we are foemen to defeat them
Whose lives we press and purchase hour to
hour;

And swore that we are cannibals and eat them
Whose strength is in the dainties we devour.

"Tripe-fed philosopher and gloomy dunce!"
To him I quick in rising soul replied,
"You are the devils cast from Heaven once,
Now from the light of heavenly wealth denied.
A fool tongue curling, 'justice' is your word:
Not you, not I, but God knows what that is,
And how much debt the crime of life incurred,
And how each yearning knave may reason his.
To vanquish Heaven is a feat for Hell,
That Pleasure, smiling, frighten at Hell's
frown;

Your duty is to envy and rebel;
Mine is to battle your rebellion down.

“Therefore, should I be gracious to your will,
Letting your fortunes bask where mine have
 flourished,
And with my art your artless hopes fulfill,
Your wants would grow in purpose, being
 nourished;
Yet would, as grew their project, lose in
 power,
For, being wronged, the courage gains in
 force;
But favors, man, would steal your anger’s
 flower,
Leaving you poor in motive and resource.
Then should I grant the simple things you
 ask,
I would be shrewdly stealing all you own:
The conquest of its own is honor’s task;
Without which task, how would its work be
 known?”

Then he, naught saying or attempting, turned,
Slinking off like a lean cat in the rain.
But scarce outside his transit I discerned,
Another came to give my fancies pain.
O mortal horror! Not until Hell’s doom,
When the last shivering consumptive imp
Will slam the black and icy gates of gloom
And fall convulsed with many a woeful crimp
Will there again such mangled monster crawl
Out of the glimmering pits (as if surviving
Satan and all his tortures) as did fall
Into my sight—a shape that howled arriving.

Of the deformities of them before
He was the ghastly, physical conjunction;
Shaped by his wounds and showing many
more

To try my fear or delicate compunction,
Threefoldly damaged, wrenched from noble
height,

With blood-stains in his beard and hair that
ran

Into mad masses, he was all, outright,
Humpbacked and crippled and a one-eyed
man.

Like the first huge up-shouldered one he
loomed,

And like the angry cripple dragged a limb,
And like the one-eyed man's his one eye
bloomed,

And as a gory giant he was grim.

He spoke: "I am that one you firstly scanned.
I am the man of many woes and wrongs.
I know the backs that suffer and withstand.
I know the hearts to which your blood be-
longs.

No longer I am anvil to your pride:
I walk, though lamed by Jealousy and Fear;
For when my comrades took me for their
guide,

The jealous rivals of my wrath stabbed here.
Then I the wisdom of our wants became,
And he who was half-sighted was put by,
Shrieking as he struck here with hideous aim,
'Let our great leader be one-eyed, as I.'

"Thus I am fit memorial of the strife;
My body is become a bloody flag.
Adorned with the atrocities of life,
I am the fury of the hut and rag.
Humpbacked I am from shouldering golden
 wrongs;
Lame—all my deeds by jealousy are crippled;
One-eyed in the half-wisdom of my throngs,
But in resolve all their terrifics tripled.
I threaten you, Revenge has yet in keep
Memory of inextinguishable stuff,
And retribution can through armies leap
Till overcrowded Hell must cry 'Enough!'

"Your crimes, though weak, have bent me into
 strength,
That I may clasp your struggles in my hand.
Though bowed, I crush; though lame, limp to
 great length;
One-eyed,—my deeds I need not understand.
Tremble and move as timber struck by steel.
Howl with repentance through your vacant
 fame.
Depart on limbs that soon may learn to kneel;
And, fallen in escaping, bleed with shame!"
He said no more; but his dark arm rose high.
And he is here. His shoulders heave with
 woe.
And he is thinking and he has one eye;
Monster, with wrongs and wrath, he will not
 go.

THE SOVEREIGN IN THE STREET

From a castle of thoughts that my conscience
was building

I studied a man who was cutting a street,
While the round-rolling sun was demeaning
and gilding

Him thinking and ripping the ditch at his
feet.

Of this native of grief, as he shoveled the fur-
row,

I write, be the subject a poem or not;
For as deep did he burrow, my love traveled
thorough

And writes, be the truth of it rubies or
rot.

Oh, 'tis weird that the truth, like a corpse on
the floor,

Should bleed on our carpets and stare at
the light;

And that Art should ignore what she taught
us before,

And tear up the lessons we prattled last
night.

Not with your eyes, my poet, rose-haunted
and grave—

Thou poet with wondering violet eyes—
Did I look on the slave digging low in the
cave,
Corroded with dust, sweat, itch, sun-
beams and flies.

O dim-blushing poet with Grecian-strung lyre,
Declare not my earth-man in melody
wrong,
Nor that Beauty's attire and effulgence in-
spire:
'Tis the voice of the singer makes noble
the song.

Like a grave-digger digging a terrible grave—
Like a sun spirit heaving the hot day with
coal,
His dredger he drave and he hove to the pave
The clods that he tore from the earth and
flung whole.

The freight of his spade, coming dun from the
bung
Of the foul-smelling sand, seemed the
filth of his fate.
And fast while he flung the material dung
Of the earth he built sidelong the mound
of his hate.

The wealth-wasting givers of feasts grew in
riches;
Wide, wide grew the hands at the hilt of
the task;
And there came a dream which is a curse on
all ditches
And pain guised the laborer's face like a
mask.

The point of the shovel grew inward and
blunt
And the love in the eye of the trencher
grew dim;
As he dug with a grunt, became shorter in
front,
And his fingers grew crooked, knock-
knuckled and grim.

Still at underground honor his scepter he
points,
With negligence digging a tragical story;
While some dunce who anoints with fat
wealth his vile joints,
Stands proud on the swift-rolling chariots
of glory.

O for a lithe shovel of truculent aim
To gouge at the greed that keeps need in
the sands!
For the spade of good fame is of wood and
steel frame,
But to masters of men it is wood, steel
and hands.

Then dig, ye bones, dig; ye have many more
years;
Your sorrows will shine to the eyelids of
God;
And Destiny hears your soft-falling tears:
O'er the task of the spade let your man's
noddle nod.

What matters it, marrow and gristle and brain
Or tendon and belly and tooth are intent?
Or that eyeball and vein in a perishing strain
To the rim of the earth-riving shovel are
bent?

Empowered of shoulder and elbow and groin,
In struggle terrific he wearies at length,
While innard and loin to the hot shovel join,
Converting his pride to the need of new
strength.

What long-contained smiles have been stop-
ped at those lips?
What thoughts dead and useless are ooz-
ing in sweat?
What majesty drips on those foul-flanneled
hips?
How laboring low makes nobility wet!

What tears that his eyelids a passage denied
Took a brinier course through the fast-
weeping pores?

What thoughts were untied—what escapings
of pride
When first he dug sands for their silver-
less ores?

I could shout to the sun (whose hot splendors
are falling
And burning this handler of shovels) be-
hold!

What devils are calling and gambling and
brawling
For them who with fingers of gold count
their gold.

But it boots not relating what devils, alack,
With smutty red limbs and blue bellies
are waiting

To harrow a pack of scared souls on the rack;
That's a matter of prayers and religious
debating.

But the pendulum swaying through seasons
to bring
The scenic effusion of May, we remem-
ber—

From flowery Spring will as quietly swing
Back, back in its path to the wilds of No-
vember.

So the beam in Time's balance will pass in its
frame
And the places of wealth become blighted
and cold;
For its gold and its fame from weary blood
came,
And Time will refund it with blood from
the gold.

SONNETS OF AN ANGEL

God's ancient deeds within my thoughts
abide;

I can remember Eden palm and glen.
Far rolled the word when chaos did subside,
And there was sunlight when I looked
again.

Jehovah smiled: the garden livened then;
His words to beastly shapes transformed ran
wide

Or blossomed in the paths of future men
Or spoke to heaven, which with stars re-
plied.

Fair shone the days; and, plentifully bedewed,
The boughs of Eden kept primeval
Spring.

At Adam's flank Eve walked those weathers
nude,

In the respect of every living thing.
Ate she for man the apple of disgrace,
And faltered, pregnant with the human race.

There was a stillness in the dark blue night,
Whose musk from viewless jars' abroad
was blown,
Making that balmy which the moon made
bright,
Deep in the wells of space where Eden
shone.
Night's heaven suddenly was wider
grown,
Showing a field of limpid sapphire light,
Which, like the rays from Heaven's glow-
ing throne,
Burned the surrounding orbs from earthly
sight.
God walked among the stars in tranquil
wrath;
The distances of heaven rolled away;
Cerulean leagues receded from his path,
Where, in the night, his thoughts made
purple day.
Then spoke the Lord to one of men: "Work
thou
Until thy master's deeds weigh on thy brow."

Man worked. The futures thawed before his face.

He searched the seas and ploughed the plains between;

Prayed to his God, kneeled under Heaven's grace,

And hung his rotting tombs with ever-green.

The toiler treaded gloomily the scene,

Remembering the God of years and space

(Though time and horizons did intervene)

Through the remembering souls of all his race.

Sometimes, brow-sick where steadfast shades accrue,

He thought he witnessed God's traditional form,

Brushing the mist of years from memory's view,

Voicing melodious thunders through the storm.

Then from his breast the toiler's voice came free:

"Father, behold what has been wrought with me!"

Thou too, proud Hell, behold this world of men!

O that I could, to set my censure high,
In some volcano's molten dip my pen

And write their shame athwart the plain
blue sky.

Ye lilies of your sex, with pathos dry,
Your cheeks will dim beneath Time's dismal
ken,

Your mild sweets curdle 'neath Time's
bitter eye,

But kindly acts will make you live again.

Ye lovers of the lily-aspect maids,

Ye mouldering hearts of earth's original
dust,

For that ye hate the dwellers in the shades,—

Look up and the breath of divine disgust

Be on you all until your given breads

Regain His love to your unloving heads.

When to the witness of your varied crimes,
 There comes the anguish of despairing
 thought,
To make the poet throw away his rhymes,
 The drinker dash the glass with nectars
 fraught,—
 When in wrath's blazes patience burns to
 naught,
Seeing your contracts broken many times,
 The soul beweeeps the stuff of which 'tis
 wrought,
And anger high in honor's tower climbs.
Because ye sell the roses of the earth
 For coins to them who watched the bush
 bloom wild;
And that ye buy more than your needs are
 worth,
 And sell the useless to the hungry child;
Boldly abuse the workers where they plod,
And in your wealth pray to the workman's
 God.

THE WORKINGMAN'S GOD

Though wit and logic disbelieve
And gospels bend
While creeds contend,
There breathes above the nurtured sod
A greater God
Than faith and folly now perceive.

Though pagan dance and Christian sing—
Though folk and priest
And skeptic feast
And angels of the choir give praise
On holy days,
A planted seed will conjure Spring.

Though Bible be the godly word,
Or be it not,
When 'tis forgot,
A greater God than Moses knew
Will speak to you
And tell you where His prophets erred.

Ye chanters of the sweetened prayer,
Ye hearts that reign,
Do not disdain
The guider of the wheel and rod;
The workman's God
Answers the kneeling millionaire.

Think, as with myrrh you warm the prayer
And blow avast
The golden blast,
The cost of odor and of gold
Will be enscrolled
Against the charity ye bear.

While the cathedral aisles are warm,
And every night
The heavens fright
The tenants of Jehovah's rain,
Your prayers attain
The God of them within the storm.

The Lord beholds you on your knees;
He takes your praise
And sees your ways
And knows the music of the song
To which belong
The singers' virtue, which he sees.

The churchless and unsapphired God,
Though pleased with hymns
And creedish whims,
Bends out of Heaven's richest air
To hear the prayer
The ploughboy whispers to the sod.

As, thick with lust or pale with hate,
Ye tempt the skies
With earthly prize
And bring to God some stolen gold,
And some withhold,
The workman prays to One as great.

As loud ye beat at Heaven's wall,
For place when Death
Will have your breath,
Believe that somewhere on the slopes,
The God of hopes
Will build sweet poverty a hall.

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